

Letter 3 *Novation*

A TRUE
RELATION;

of a most

Dreadful Fire

which happened on the City of

Udem or Uhien

IN

GERMANY:

Together, with an Account of the Regulars, Monastries, Churches, Houses, People, and Cattle, that suffered in those most Devouring Flames, very Remarkable, and not inferiour to that of *London*.

SIR,

According to my Obligation, when I set forward in my Travels, of transmitting to you my Observations, and other Occurrences; I am sorry that my first Letter should come frair with so Tragical a Story, which scarce ever was parallell'd, but in the dreadful Conflagration of *London*: I question not, but the Commemoration of your own Losses, in that, will cause a Christian feeling and compassion in all that shall hear of this, for those poor Wretches, that one hour gloried in their Riches, Relations and pleasant Habitations; the next, was forc'd to wander in the Fields, with their parch'd Bodies, destitute of any Abode: But let the Relation speak their doleful Condition.

At *Udem*, or *Uhien*, a small but Beautiful City, near *Xanten*, on the lower part of the River *Rhine*, in *Germany*; that on *Weanesday* in the Holy Week of *Easter*, in the House of a Brewer; at the sign of the *Red-Hart*, broak out a most dreadful Fire, which in an hour and half; or two hours at most, by it's Raging Flames, the whole City was turned into Ashes, with all the Rich Furniture their Houses were adorned with. The devouring Fire knew no difference betwixt things Sacred and Prophane; but equally in the Combust fell, the Monasteries of the Regulars and Monks, the common Granary, in which was Stored the City Corn, the Town-House or Court, with all the Houses of the Citizens; excepting that of the Town-Clark, and a little Shed, not far from the Court, in which was kept the Engines, on which the Flames, (which makes us wonder) never exercised it's Fury, but the Temple of the *Catholiques*, is still standing without a Roof: The Bells were melted down, the Organs and the Altar spared; all things mournfully appeared.

Amongst those that were burnt, are Two and Twenty Regulars, and Fifty Seven others; and we fear many more, who are not yet discovered.

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The hopes of saving their Lives made them flye to *Subterraneus Vaults* : One Man, thinking to avoid that intollerable heat, made his *Sanctuary* his *Sepulchre*, the *Oven*, in which he thought to have secured his tender Flesh from Raging Flames, proved the *Urne* of his pulverated Carcase.

A large Chest, in which the Citizens and Country People had treasured up their Wealth, and deposited in the Church, as a *Sanctuary* against the rapine of hungry Soldiers, who like *Locusts*, have for some years over-spread and infested those Countrys, was at the beginning of this horrible Incendium, drawn forth into the Church-Yard and there devoured by Flames, with the Wooden Crosses that graced the Tombes of slumbering Saints.

The Cattle perished, one *Cow* only escaping ; the Hair and Ears being burnt off.

So great was the horror and confusion of these poor Wretches, and so violently raged the Flames ; that all their Wealth and Substance was consumed before they could reach the City Gates. A little Trunk belonging to a Lady, in which was Money and Jewels, valued at Ten Millions of Imperials ; being mounted on a Porters back, thinking to have saved it from the Flames, not far from the City Gates the *Iron-Ring* brook by which he carried it ; and down it fell, the Fire pursued so close, the Porter to save his Life was forc'd to run and leave his Treasure, which was soon devoured by the raging Element, but the melted *Masse* was after found.

The Goods that was cast into Wells, and Pools, was in a manner with the Water dryed, and burnt up; the Chains and Winals, with which they drew Water looked like Fire-brands, so that no man with his hands could endure to touch them; almost impossible was it, for man to find a passage out of the City: Some ran one way, some another, the Flames still met & pursued them. Horrible shrieks filled every corner ; Children lost their Antient Parents ; Mothers left their tender Babes ; and happy was he, that by his swiftness could escape, which none did, but those that left in the Flames their Hair and Cloaths, as pawns for their Lives. The memory of man hath not heard of so sudden and terrible a Conflagration; the Destruction of this City, being as total as that of *Jerusalem* ; scarce any man, knowing the Foundation of his late Habitation.

Thus Dear Sir, as brief as I could, have I drawn you the Scene of their miseries, having rid three *German Leagues* out of my way to view the Ruins, and observe the poor Inhabitants scattered about the Fields in Huts and Tents.

I shall now prosecute my Journey for *Vienna*, where I hope to receive your Letters and Bills, and in the intrim am,

Your Obliged Friend and Servant

I. D.

Xanten, April the 13th. 85.
Stila Nova.

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